



Gearing Up For Your Transitions

Begin To Manage (Co-Manage) Your Own Money

Adapted with permission from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Specialized Care

Financial Planning is a huge part of independence. Choose a bank that you would like to do business with. If you have not started already a savings account is a good place to begin. Check with your local bank to see if they report the credits to the credit bureau which can be helpful as making regular deposits with limited withdrawals, can create a line of credit.

Independence generates bills. A checking account is an easy way for you to pay your bills. It can be in a regular checking account in your name or a joint account with your parents. When you marry, you may want a joint account with your spouse. Regular deposits show responsibility. Learning how to balance your checkbook – and balancing it every month when your bank statement arrives – is among the best money management habits you can keep. There are a number of online tools to assist you in balancing your check book. Here is a helpful example:

<http://mappingyourfuture.org/money/checkbook.htm>

Establishing Credit

You will need to establish good credit which makes it easier to obtain financial assistance of any kind, such as an auto loan, rent an apartment, buy a house or get a credit card. An absence of prior credit history can lead to the same set of problems as a bad credit history.

Establish a Joint Account. Your parents can add you to their account; the credit history is reflected on both your account and your parents'.

Consider applying for a small loan at the bank or a credit card from the local department store. A co-signer will be needed if younger than 18. It is better to opt for a loan with terms that can be satisfied without undue financial strain. Paying off your debt will create good credit.

Creating a budget may not sound like the most exciting thing in the world to do, but it is vital in keeping your finances in order. Budgets are the only practical way to get a grip on your spending - and to make sure your money is being used the way you want it to be used.

You may find this online tool helpful: <http://mappingyourfuture.org/money/budgetcalculator.htm> .

Another helpful guide is a [Sample Budget for Adults](#) or [Sample Budget for Teens](#)

Identify how you're spending money now.

Evaluate your current spending and set long-term financial goals.

Track your spending.

Explore your career options early while in high school. To successfully transition to adult life, finding gainful employment is the ultimate outcome. Unemployment results in poverty, lower health status and dependency on government programs.

When you begin earning your own income, you will need to file income taxes. Delaware Department of Health and Social Services recommends a [FREE Tax Service online](#).